MUTINY

A PAPER OF
ANARCHISTIC IDEAS
& ACTIONS

#43 OCTOBER 2009

Critique on the Climate Change Movement

Report on Climate Camp SA

FREE ZINE

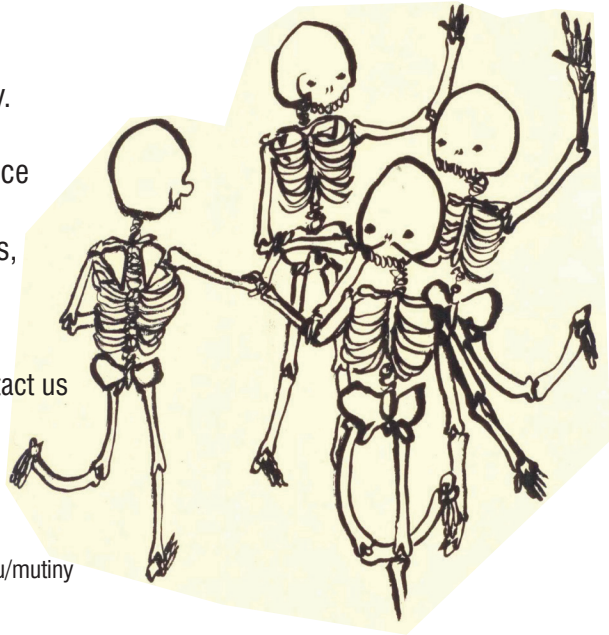
Calais, on the Border

The Zombie Dance of Social Democracy

Report on Economic Crisis Conference

Makhno - Platformist
October 26, 1888–July 6, 1934

Mutiny is an anarchist collective based in Sydney. We started this zine to explore different avenues of disobedience & resistance, & to encourage people to write about their ideas, actions & experiences.



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Brief News

Victoria: climate camp

500 people joined a protest at Hazelwood power station, Australia's biggest single source of carbon emissions and one of the dirtiest coal plants in the world, demanding that Hazelwood should be closed and replaced with renewable energy sources.

People in small groups slipped through police lines to enter the grounds of Hazelwood. Other groups of demonstrators repeatedly tried to push over the temporary fencing in sections. 22 people were arrested. Most were charged with trespass; one protestor was charged with assaulting police after allegedly colliding with a police officer after jumping the fence.

The day concluded with protestors forming a human sign in the shape of a wind turbine.

Germany

Several thousand protesters in German cities marched to protest against rallies by the extremist right National Democratic Party (NPD) on Saturday, September 12. In the northern city of Hannover, around 3,000 people took to the streets against just 270 neo-nazis, while another 550 people protested against a right-wing music festival which had drawn around 370 NPD followers to the town of Poessneck in Thuringia, in the former East Germany.

The events followed a demonstration a day earlier in Hamburg, at which 12 policemen and several protesters were injured as around 90 NPD followers threw stones, bottles and lit fires in protest at an alternative left-wing street festival.

Guinea

157 people were killed and more than 1,200 were wounded when troops of the military junta opened fire on 50,000 pro-democracy protesters at a rally in the capital's main football stadium. Witnesses said that security forces stripped female protesters and raped them in the streets and soldiers stabbed protesters with knives and bayonets.

Moussa "Dadis" Camara, seized power on December 23 when his men broke down the glass doors of the state TV station after the death of longtime leader Lansana Conte and announced that the constitution had been dissolved.

Since winning independence half a century ago from France, Guinea has been pillaged by its ruling elite. Its 10 million people are among the world's poorest, even though its soil has diamonds, gold, iron and half the world's reserves of the raw material used to make aluminium.

Iran

Students at Sharif University in Tehran staged an anti-government protest on Tuesday September 28, two days after a demonstration of hundreds of students at Tehran University caused President Mahmoud Ahmadinejad to cancel a planned visit.

These show that government efforts to intimidate protesters by arresting dozens of supposed student leaders, and banning others from campus, have not been entirely successful.

Protesters carried green balloons and ribbons, a symbol of the protest movement since the disputed June 12 presidential election, and banners that read "The university is still alive".

Chiapas, Mexico

On the morning of Tuesday 1st September, about 150 members of paramilitary groups attacked a group of Zapatistas who were working in a recently established community

within the autonomous municipality of San Manuel, caracol La Garrucha.

In the clash a member of the paramilitary group Aric-Union of Unions was killed, and more than 20 people were wounded, most of them Zapatistas. Seven Zapatistas were captured, imprisoned and tortured in Santo Tomas. One man was suspended from a tree with the aim of hanging him, and another had his testicles cut off.

The lands were reclaimed by the Zapatistas in 1994 and they have been farming it since 1997. The people who live there have been harassed by paramilitaries since July, when they established houses on the land, though this attack was the first by such a large, armed group.

Greece

Immigrants detained in Pagaini, an infamous immigration detention centre on the island of Lesbos, rioted and set areas around the detention centre on fire. They are demanding permits that would allow them to leave detention and legally stay in Greece for 30 days. During the demonstrations they flocked into the yard of the prison chanting "Azadi, Azadi" ("Freedom").

Uganda

A taxi driver was shot dead by a policeman in Masaka on September 29, sparking a demonstration in which mechanics, residents and bicycle taxi riders blocked a major road with logs and metal bars. Riot police fired teargas to disperse the angry crowd, who pelted them with stones.

An eyewitness said Fred Mugenyi ran from traffic police into a nearby banana plantation. A policeman followed him and shot him dead. The district Police commander said the killer cop has been arrested.UK: Bristol

Five people were arrested when more than 100 protesters stormed financial buildings in Bristol as part of anti-capitalist demonstrations with signs bearing slogans such as 'We won't pay for their crisis.' Foam pies and paint pellets were thrown against windows and one protester glued himself to the door of the Royal Bank of Scotland.

The protest was part of the [excellently named] Bristol Co-Mutiny, a week-long "uprising of autonomous actions and events," including workshops based in a squatted church.

USA: California

Students and workers at the University of California, Santa Cruz, held a week-long occupation from the first day of term, releasing a statement that began

"We are occupying this building […] because the current situation has become untenable. Across the state, people are losing their jobs and getting evicted, while social services are slashed. California's leaders, from state officials to university presidents, have demonstrated how they will deal with this crisis: everything and everyone is subordinated to the budget. They insulate themselves from the consequences of their own fiscal mismanagement, while those who can least afford it are left shouldering the burden. Every solution on offer only accelerates the decay of the State of California. It remains for the people to seize what is theirs."

Banners hung from the building included 'We Are The Crisis' and 'Raise Hell, Not Costs.'

http://occupyca.wordpress.com

India

About 400 pilots with Air India engaged in a four-day wildcat strike to protest wage cuts and not being allowed to form a union. The strike ended after the government overruled management's plan for massive wage cuts.

Earlier in September, about half of Jet Airway's 760 pilots called in sick over five days, forcing the airline to cancel more than 1,000 flights. The pilots ended their sickout after the airway agreed to reinstate four pilots it had fired.

Serbia

Fascism and homophobia

A queer pride parade planned in Belgrade was cancelled by organisers due to extensive public threats from fascists. Serbian police cancelled permission for the parade to be held in its planned location in the centre of the city and told Pride organisers that they would be held responsible for any damage caused by the hooligans and fascist groups.

This was the third attempt in eight years to organise a public demonstration of lgbt and queer groups in Belgrade. In 2001 fascist gangs attacked and seriously injured people that were walking towards the meeting place for the Parade. In 2004, the second attempt was cancelled by the organisers themselves, as the police refused to cooperate on all levels and the threats of the fascists went beyond limits.

Anarchists arrested

Six anarcho-syndicalists, activists in or associates of the Anarcho-Syndicalist Initiative, the Serbian section of the International Workers' Association (IWA), were arrested on trumped-up charges of "international terrorism."

The arrests are allegedly related to a direct action which took place at the Greek Embassy on August 25. Negligible damage was done to the embassy in an act of symbolic solidarity with Greek hunger-striker Thodoros Iliopoulos. Although one of the accused, General Secretary of the IWA Ratibor Trivunac, clearly and publically declared that he knew nothing of the action, he was arrested. It is not the first time that authorities have come after him or his comrades for no other reason than the fact that they are radical critics of the state.

If the six are found guilty of the charges of "international terrorism", they could be facing 3-15 years in prison. As it is, they are to be held in custody for at least one month while the case is organised.

Solidarity actions demanding their release have been held around the world, including at the Serbian consulate in Sydney.

http://asi.zsp.net.pl/

Strike actions

There are currently over 30 strike actions throughout Serbia, many of which have taken-on radical forms in recent months, including: factory occupations, railway blockades, city-hall and police station takeovers, sleep-ins, boss-nappings, hunger strikes, even a case of self-mutilation. In these actions, workers are often seeking to prevent shady privatization deals from occurring, or trying to save their jobs and enterprises from bankruptcy (following such privatizations). The main concern of most workers is to ensure the continued payment of salaries, compensation, etc... upon which their survival and that of their communities depends. Many of these strikes have been organized at the factory level, with little input from the mainstream unions in Serbia.

The IMF recently gave the Serbian government until late October to reign in public sector spending and embark on a programme of economic restructuring, typically involving the privatization of public assets, as a condition of receiving a EUR4.3 billion loan.

The Greenhouse Crisis: Close Calls

Alf from Alphington

It was good to see the Call to Action in your July issue, following through an earlier article declaring environmental summits to different in aim from G20, IMF, OECD, WTO or World Bank conferences. Nevertheless the content of the Call worries me.

At this early stage in the development of an ecoanarchist movement – let's call things by their right names – it seems inappropriate to focus on a single spectacular global environmental summit even to attack or "blockade" it. The point should rather be to show that direct action on the ground produces results, while global conferences produce only hot air – in every sense of the two words.

James Hansen has laid the blame for inaction on global warming squarely on global capital. It is against global capital that action should be directed. The clamour from the middle class environmental movement for "action", any action, from the state, specifically in the form of a "state of emergency", which would give all power to a "new Churchill" veers all too dangerously close to the ecofascism of which the Club of Rome once warned. Modern nation-states, now remodelled as reinventions of the corporation, would be forced into line if they even claimed the power to impose any kind of carbon emission on capital against capital's will, particularly the extremely low and stringent limits science now tells us are needed. The Copenhagen conference itself would use the Kyoto declaration to force any recalcitrant state to toe the line. The states' abandonment of any serious power to capital in the nineties surrendered all such power to the working class, in its broadest sense, organised outside of and against the states. The future of the earth now lies in the hands of that global class, that class which is not a class. Instead of a tragi-comic "anarchy" of non-decision-making, where every state or corporation blames the other for the inaction they all desire, in a spectacle which tries to transfer the impotence of states and corporations to all other actors on the planet, we need a real anarchy in which ordinary people everywhere hurl corporate pollution out of their everyday life. As the Call to Action declares, "climate change is related to people's daily lives." Right on. Let's keep it that way. Instead of a disempowering spectacularisation of climate change – where the people "up there" decide nothing can be done – the revolutionisation of everyday life. Yes, things should happen during the Copenhagen conference, but not at Copenhagen, and with a very different, a very serious agenda.

It is not a question of initiating a new "cycle of struggles." That cycle is already here, moving out of the cycle paths presented by the state. The peak hour central city transport gridlocks can be intensified to block anyone except those using public transport to get to work (if this is really where they want to go). Anti-ticketing inspectors in groups of five or six should patrol trams, buses and trains handing out rewards to those without tickets. Landlords would be presented with bills for cutting carbon emissions in sub-standard working class houses, and their offices occupied if they won't pay. Teams of climate activists should tour city office buildings at closing time to ensure all lights are turned off when workers go home (instead of being left on all night).

These are just a few ideas – other readers will have even better ones, I am sure. The idea is that a variety of actions, at different places, but at similar times, will be far harder to suppress that a single "blockade" of passengers getting on a plane or something similar. Instead of watching people on telly saying solemnly "nothing can be done" everyone can go out and do their own thing.

The Call to Action in *Mutiny* is not the only call in general circulation. There is also a call for a "general strike" of some kind, as pressure on the Copenhagen conferees to do something. One kind of passivity, it seems, can cancel out another. We should, perhaps, invite anyone "on strike" to join in our carnivalesque decision-making, so they could find out, by their own actions, where power over the environment really lies. It would break down divisions within the environmental movement by bringing together all those committed to serious action.

REPORT BACK FROM CLIMATE CAMP PORT AUGUSTA

South Australia's first climate camp was held on 24th - 27th September in the Port Augusta region. A range of workshops discussed the science and politics of climate change, including the need for an immediate switch to renewable energy. A community forum was held on the Friday, which included speakers from various climate action groups and a space for discussion.

Port Augusta is home to three coal-fired power stations, Playford A, Playford B and Northern, which supply around 20-30% of South Australia's electricity. The Playford B station is considered one of the dirtiest in Australia. A 2009 report by The Climate Group found that Playford B produces more greenhouse gases per unit of electricity than any other power station in Australia.

Climate camp organisers negotiated with police before and during the camp to ensure the safety of all participants. Direct action was planned targeting the coal train, which runs from the coal mine at Leigh Creek to the Port Augusta power stations. On Friday police informed camp organisers and sent out a press release saying that the train would not run for the weekend for safety reasons.

On Saturday morning a crowd of fifty gathered to demand that the aging, inefficient stations be closed down and replaced with renewable energy.

The area surrounding the power stations had been declared a "protected area" under the Protective Security Act 2007, for the period of Climate Camp. This gives police additional powers to ask for names and addresses, to search people and vehicles, and to restrict access within the protected area. This same law was used during Adelaide's recent Defence + Industry Expo 2009.

Protesters marched two kilometres through the protected area before they were stopped by around 70 police including several mounted police. Police had constructed a tempory fence 800 metres from the main gates and stationed extra police, including a dog squad, around the power stations. It was reported that up to 150 police were involved. Despite the huge police presence, no arrests were made.

After negotiations, a small delegation of protesters were escorted by police to the actual front gates of the power stations where representatives of Flinders Power failed to meet them to accept a Community Decommission Order.

On Sunday it was revealed that the coal train had in fact run, at at a different time than usual so as to mislead protesters. The train had derailed at Copely, due to a technical fault, shortly after leaving Leigh Creek in the morning.

On the day of the rally, a police liaison spoke to the sergeant in charge and questioned the validity of the train being stopped and asked for proof of their claimed action. Protestors were then reassured to take the word of the officers that the train had been stopped for the whole weekend. Police liaison Lauren Campbell said "Future South Australian Climate Camps are less likely to undergo negotiations with police due to the deliberate abuse of our trust."

The Zombie Dance of Social Democracy

:the Mutiny Collective

Social democracy is the new black. In the wake of the global financial crisis, everyone's talking about Keynes again. In parties all throughout the rich, powerful countries of the world, all you hear is gasps of "Oh my god, Keynes is so good" or "He is so hot" or "Keynes? JM to me. Did you hear what he said about money?" and "I heard he saved capitalism". The saviour, shunned for the past 30 years in an unrelenting barrage of neoliberalism, has come again.

It's Keynes' brilliance that has brought us the billion-dollar bailouts and stimulus packages. From Rudd to Obama to Brown, everyone's suddenly his biggest fan. And with Keynes' popularity reignited comes a renewed push for social democracy. It was Keynes after all who advocated for big government spending on welfare and other public infrastructure in times of crisis as a way of keeping the economy going.

Pretty much everyone is a critic of neoliberalism these days, even those who were, just 3 years ago, its greatest proponents. But only the most rabid neoliberals hate social democracy. It's the great compromise – the only reasonable option – the one that saves us from the laissez faire hell of neoliberalism (which, surprise surprise, hasn't worked out that well) and the competing evil grip of fascism. The only problem is, all 3 options seem a bit crap.

What is social democracy?

Social democracy is the name given to the socialist goal of anti-capitalist revolution, that became so watered-down throughout the 20th century that it now consists of little more than the demand for a mixed economy. The glorious marriage of government and capitalism. A warmer, cosier capitalism. The welfare state.

By the end of WWII, under Keynesian influence, most western governments were willing to adopt social democratic demands: government subsidised health-care, aged-pensions, unemployment benefits, a livable minimum wage, free education, etc. The demands are reasonable. Once implemented, they keep people from starving, or dying from lack of access to health care. They promote literacy, and can go some way towards assuaging class divisions.

But at the same time, their implementation necessarily works to create new organs of government control – hospitals, welfare offices and schools take on policing roles, and work to further political agendas, often at the expense of those who rely on these

services. Further, for the small degree to which social democracy can ameliorate the inequalities arising from class divisions – through universal access to health care and education – it primarily works to reinforce the existence of class, by actively forestalling revolution.

Social Democracy and Revolution.

Social democracy arose out of working class struggle – capital needed to satisfy, to some extent, various demands of the working class. In Europe, post-WWI, revolutionary working class struggle was agitating in various forms. It was this pressure and force that created fear of revolution within the ruling class. This led to the various concessions granted on behalf of capital, for the benefit of the working class. Through the attainment of, for example rising real wages, inclusive welfare, trade union rights, the working class seemed content to give up its revolutionary desire. The comfort zone that was created through these concessions, sought to contain the working class and keep them reasonably happy, in order to maintain the capitalist system.

The institutionalisation of struggles, through trade unions or social democratic parties, highlights the inherent contradiction that is riddled throughout social democracy. On the one hand, these unions emphasise strength in collective organising, however, the de-politicised and bureaucratic form that characterises unions in many countries today (there are of course obvious exceptions), often means that these institutions will, first and foremost, seek to ensure their continued existence. For example, trade unions will help to organise for 'bread and butter' demands, such as wage increases. Yet, it remains in their interest to maintain the current class relation and not articulate an analysis that would perhaps offer an alternative. Whilst the working class is mobilised through social democratic demands, it is simultaneously demobilised, so that struggle is somewhat contained as to never truly challenge the class relation.

Some within the left would argue that social democracy is a stepping stone towards revolution, and thus making social democratic demands is useful. However, social democracy as it exists today, no longer truly attempts to articulate an analysis beyond capitalism. Hence, any struggle arguing for social democracy is essentially reformist and thus, negates a revolutionary politic. Revolutionary change does not lie further along the path of social democracy, it lies on a different road altogether. Social democracy is in fact, a one-way dead-end street.

But what about healthcare and education and welfare?

For a lot of folks who are critical of the state, this question is the sticking point. No one wants people to starve because they don't have jobs. No one wants people to die

because they can't afford healthcare. No one wants to be homeless because they've lost their job. To fight for an end to social democracy, on the premise that by taking away the safety net, the multitude will become revolutionary, is abominable. It's the most odious kind of cynicism.

To suggest that the working class should lose access to government services at a time when the state is providing private enterprises with the biggest hand-outs of all time similarly makes little sense. Such a move would just further exacerbate the divide between the ruling and working classes, especially when we consider the neoliberal attacks the global working class has been enduring for the past 30 years, which are sure to continue.

What we need to keep in mind is that we aren't limited to a choice between dependency on the whims of the state and starvation. Whilst we are currently forced to live in a "mixed economy", we can't be blinkered into believing that our only other options are neoliberalism or facism (as many would have us believe). It has been argued that a focus on "mutual aid" as a response to social democracy is simply 'ahistorical posturing'. Though we should be wary of falling into such a trap, we also need to recognise the political importance of such projects and their role in revolutionary struggle. Beyond the control of the state, mutual aid housing projects, friendly societies, schools, health centers, etc have all proven throughout history, and across the world, their potential to enable communities to realise their practical, day-to-day independence from both the state and capitalism. The practice of such alternatives is the only way in which social democracy can be truly accosted by the working class.

Whilst social democracy is currently enjoying a resurgence (in theory if not in practice), it's inevitable that this won't last. Attacks on workers' rights; on healthcare; on welfare will continue as government coffers run low. Already in Australia, PM Rudd is warning of lean times and budget cuts ahead (stimulus packages have to be paid for from somewhere) - suggesting that the already woeful services will decline even further.

The question we are then faced with is: do we fight to retain these government services, which are contradictory at best; or do we use our energies to create other forms of aid in our communities, that go beyond the control of the state, and that embody revolutionary practice?

Calais: on the Border

Hi,

I feel a million years from home right now. I am working with No Borders and with the migrants in Calais, France to oppose the border and its ramifications here.

As you may well know, migrants are here in Calais in the hundreds, sleeping on the streets and in small camps, facing constant police repression. Many people are trying to get to the UK, while some are looking to other options as the way to the UK is dangerous, unsure and expensive. They risk being deported back to countries such as Greece or Malta, where they first entered the EU, and where the conditions for migrants are dangerous and inhumane. The French and UK governments are working together to "clean up" the area, destroying peoples' homes, leaving them stranded and homeless. The situation is extremely desperate.

A group of migrants are embarking upon a hunger strike tomorrow in protest of the inhumane conditions here. I am in awe of their strength. One of the hunger strikers' demands is that they be accepted in a safe western country such as Australia.

I am writing to you to help support us by publicising the situation here in Calais, by spreading the message within your networks and putting pressure on the Australian government to accept the migrants engaging in the hunger strike. We are calling on people worldwide to support the migrants here with actions. We appreciate your solidarity in whichever form it may take.

Please find our press release attached. We provide regular updates on the situation at http://calaismigrantsolidarity.wordpress.com/

Thankyou, Just Red

We call on all people concerned for the welfare of the migrants in Calais to mobilise and oppose the 'solution' which will, according to the Minister of Immigration and National Identity Eric Besson, be carried out this week by the French riot police to eradicate the jungle. We denounce this act of aggression against migrants who have already suffered greatly and endured much in their journeys to Calais. Besson said in May that he wanted to make the Calais region a migrant free zone. Since then, squats and camps in Calais have been destroyed on multiple occasions. It is now the turn of the Calais jungle.

We do not regard migrants as the 'problem', and our solidarity is the only possible response to the situation they have been put in. We reject the normalisation and abusive misuse of the words 'clandestine' and 'illegal', and support the spirit of Article 14 of the 1951 Geneva Convention which stipulates the right of each individual to claim asylum anywhere they choose.

However, we go further than this narrow conception of asylum, which excludes people fleeing non-state violence, rape and also ignores those forced to leave through the violence of a poverty imposed on them by the trade rules fixed in Washington and Geneva. These forms of violence are created by the wars that capitalism wages against people, to secure and exploit their resources and labour.

We believe that all people ought to have the freedom to move and to settle, and that this freedom should not be reserved for a minority, because we believe in equal rights for all, rights

which should not be given or bestowed by governments but which should be guaranteed to any human being.

For migrants, leaving their homes, families and lives, perhaps forever, is never an easy choice, but often a necessary one. It is an act of survival for the migrants' families, a great sacrifice with unknown rewards or failures. People are prepared to risk their lives because it represents a chance of a better future. Failure is not an option, and governments, despite all their efforts, will not be able to stop them.

A very important aspect of the Geneva Convention recognises that failure to carry a valid passport is not in itself an illegal act. The migrants in Calais have had no choice but to become 'clandestine', there are no legal avenues for them to get to Europe or the UK overland – all legal routes are closed off – which is why they are forced into hands of smugglers and all the dangers and expense that incurs.

The 'choices' in Calais: voluntary returns and the European asylum system

With Besson's plan there are only two choices left open for migrants in Calais. The first is the so-called 'voluntary' return, which is clearly no such thing. The approach taken in Calais, and increasingly across the jungles of Northern France, is to grind down the resolve of the migrants by subjecting them to extreme levels of police violence and intimidation. The solution of 'voluntary return' is proposed by the IOM and now by the UNHCR, recently present in Calais, to give its 'blessing' to this operation.

The second option is to claim asylum in France. Most of the migrants are rightly very afraid since this is a potential trap for them. They are likely to have been fingerprinted and recorded on the Eurodac database, and according to the Dublin II agreements, if they claim asylum in France or anywhere else in Europe and have had their fingerprints previously in a so called 'safe' country, usually Greece or Italy, they are likely to be sent back. Greece receives money from the EU commission for each Dublin case it receives back there.

In Greece, Iraqis and Afghans have a 0% success rate of asylum, yet for most European countries Greece is still regarded as 'safe' to send people back to. Norway and more and more courts have started to rule that it's dangerous to send people back to Greece, now other European governments should follow suit.

The British and French governments, as well as the mainstream media, claim that the migrants are not 'genuine' refugees as they are not claiming asylum in these countries. But who would when it potentially adds up to an act of suicide? Through these arrangements, the European states have created a system that is destroying peoples' chances of asylum and obtaining refugee status.

The consequence of Franco-British agreements

One could regard the 'problem' of the migrants in Calais as having been entirely created by the British refusal to join the Schengen space, and the French government's compliance to this. In fact, it is the result of a sort of anomaly created by the 'special' bilateral arrangements between France and Britain. The problem also relates more generally to the closure of Europe's borders to migrants, coordinated through the European pact on Immigration and Asylum.

The bilateral agreements between France and Britain after the closure of Sangatte camp have led to the seemingly endless implementation of more and more expensive and sophisticated borders controls, and to the movement of British border controls onto French soil. As the French government has ceded to the British and accepted to implement its politics of border closure and reinforcement, the obvious consequences are that people are blocked for longer at the border.

So as tighter immigration controls cause the build up of people behind the border, the 'solution' taken is destruction of the jungles. The migrants are thus dispersed and deported as a means of making the problem 'disappear'. Besides the barbarity of these methods, these policies remain fundamentally ineffective, as they force people to become even more dependent on smugglers.

When Sangatte was shut down in 2002, we were told that Sarkozy had solved the 'problem' in Calais. Of course the migrants have kept on coming, and the aim has since then been to try to make their presence invisible. Until now the governments had several options to make the migrants disappear:

1) Let people pass when there are too many.

2) Subject them to levels of intimidation and violence, so that they leave and try to pass from somewhere else

3) Destroy their living spaces and belongings

Now the government pretends to resolve the situation, justifying its actions with talks of networks of smugglers, shameless lies claiming that local people are being attacked every day and of the need to protect migrants as well as local businesses. Such lies have always been expedient for politicians wishing to create a scape-goat, the consequences of such irresponsibility are well known and are very well recorded.

To cover his policies with a humane veneer, Besson talks of the 170 migrants who were given asylum in Calais in the run up to the closure of the jungle, a fact which turns out to be a complete fiction: according to associations in Calais precisely none have been given asylum.

Today, we are about to witness a "clearance" of migrants beneath claims of humanitarian concerns. Besson pretends under the bright lights of the media that he has found a dignified 'solution' for them, but this is clearly not the case.

The real problems that so often force migrants to leave their homes will never be resolved unless all governments, and particularly the British, American and French governments, examine and change their own warmongering approaches and their economic, political, and ecological foreign policy aims throughout the so called 'developing' and 'undeveloped' world.

Migrants will not stop coming and they are welcome here. Freedom of movement is everybody's right!

We call on people everywhere to come to Calais this week to show solidarity and to denounce current migrant politics!

We call for the end of Dublin II, selective migration policies and any other rule that stops people migrating where they choose to or need to!

We call for solidarity actions outside French embassies and consulates, to protest against the destruction of refugee and migrants camps by this country that likes to call itself the home of human rights.

Conference Review:
Seeing Through Empire's New Clothes

The conference 'Seeing Through Empire's New Clothes' billed itself as "a conference to discuss strategies for anti-capitalist struggle around the economic crisis". This particularly worthwhile focus – to strategise about a revolutionary response to the economic crisis in the face of a tide of social-democratic/reformist rhetoric – was counterbalanced by my cynical apprehension about attending another closed-shop leftist get-together.

So let me get this cynicism out of the way first. I've been to many conferences over the years and been involved in organising a few. While nearly every single time a conference can be justified on the grounds that 'it's always good to get together and talk', at a certain point you got to start to ask yourself when the sum total of all these is actually going to see us moving forward. Otherwise it just seems that conferences have become an end in themselves.

On the one hand, 'Seeing Through Empire's New Clothes' didn't really bring people to attend beyond the various outlines of the left. However, the barometer of success, in terms of building a strong movement, will never be how many people attend a conference like this. The success of this conference would lie in how the people who did turn up – who put on workshops or participated in them – would use it to discuss and strategise what sort of struggle around the economic crisis was possible and how we could play a part in creating solidarity amongst ourselves and with other people affected. It might then be measured by how much all of this is put into practice.

In terms of workshops, I was impressed with how nearly all on the programme dealt with a specific topic that represented an aspect of the crisis – as opposed to a free-for-all where every single agenda is covered and which ends up being too broad to have any real focus. Examples of this were one on outworker organising presented by the Asian Women at Work Network, the 'Sharehood' alternative economies workshop, the critique of social democracy economics workshop and more.

The workshop based on the proposal for a Union Delegates Network was excellent. It had a bit of roleplaying to get people involved, some useful history about shopfloor organising and a solid proposal for the creation of this network. The proposal led to an interesting discussion about how those of us there, workers, students and unemployed people, should relate to already existing union structures in our organising and led to a commitment to communicate on this proposal further.

The 'Unemployed Workers' workshop provided an extensive history about unemployed workers movements and organising which was then used as a base for a dicussion about what an unemployed workers struggle could look like today under the conditions of the economic crisis. A workshop titled 'Economies of Racism, Queer Households and the Crisis' came from a slightly more abstract angle. It dealt with how the term 'working families' has become entrenched as a conservative way of expressing a response to the crisis, and posed the idea of 'queer households' – partly dealing with sexuality but also incorporating other myriad types of households that aren't 'working families' - as a way to think about our response.

It did look that the programme was likely to repeat the problem of many left conferences in being too intellectual/academic, but this was only partly the case. I do think that if more people are ever going to come to these things we really have to move away from 'intellectual specialists' presenting workshops at all. The general tone of discussion at this conference was good – self-aware that while these spaces are useful we need to be engaging with people beyond them. Also, class politics were discussed more openly and forthright than at many other conferences i've been to. The only question that remains is what people who attended make happen out of these discussions.

by SourDough

Review

Endgame Volume Two: Resistance
Derrick Jensen

I'll lay odds this is the only really fat second volume in a series that sells much better than the first volume. The first is called 'The Problem of Civilisation'. Oh yeah, that sounds like a fun 500 pages. Will I get that or the part about resistance? Shit I dunno. Anway, it's probably unfair for me to review just the second half of a book I haven't read the start of, but I figure it's kind of OK because most people will skip that bit anyway.

I am very fond of a series of dumb thriller novels by Lee Child about an ex-army dude names Jack Reacher who wanders around America having badly written but very compelling adventures. This is kind of of the nonfiction activist equivalent – the writing is simplistic and repetitive, the dialogue is stilted, the characters are wooden ciphers with only the bluntest moralistic motivations (good/evil), but hell, you can read it in a few hours and you won't be bored. It's not exactly stylish, but it is dynamic, and you always fell like there's about to be an awesome shoot-out or explosion or something. It sounds like I'm bagging it, but I partly mean this as a compliment – so much activist theory is boring and anaemic, it's nice to read something with some punch to it. On the other hand, there's a reason you don't look to potboiling thrillers for political ideas.

The basic argument is that civilisation is totally going to totally fuck the planet, and should be destroyed by all possible means. I'm not sure exactly what he means by civilisation, I guess he defined that in volume one. A good part of the book is devoted to equating civilisation with perpetrators of violence against women. I think this is a weak analogy; the relationship of violence an abuser has with his victim is individual, while the relationship civilisation (I really want to say capitalism, but I'll go with his terminology) has with the earth is structural – making an investment decision that devastates a landbase is a lot different to assaulting your wife or daughter. I'm not saying it's better, or worse, but it takes a different kind of disassociation, and a different kind of resistance. More generally, I think it's a bad deal to try and use violence against women as a metaphor, and I think you could reasonably expect to pick up a fat books about the environment and not read a bunch of potentially triggering material about abuse.

Generally, his arguments about what's wrong with civilisation are confused; sometimes, those running civilisation are mentally ill, at other times he asserts that they are acting rationally in terms of the rewards society offers. I also don't think it's cool to use mental illness as a metaphor, but fuck, if I keep complaining about his metaphors I will be here all day.

There is some useful tactical information here, especially about explosives, especially in relation to blowing up dams. I think you could get a good 250 pages into this before you find out there's any more to resistance than blowing up dams. Dude really wants to blow up dams. But there is virtually nothing about strategy – that is, how individual acts of sabotage can link up in some sort of broader goal-oriented movement. It's especially striking, since he writes off the possibility of any mass movement – most people just won't realise how bad civilisation is – and obviously envisages some kind of network of dedicated underground cells. Yes, his solution to civilisation's evils seems to be a small group of secretive terrorists trying to wipe out most of the human race.

Because the end of civilisation is going to be a disaster for humans. He's explicit about this: the end of civilisation means near genocide, the radical reduction of the human population. To me, this is just misanthropy, and if you think a looming eco-catastrophe – what Jensen calls 'the crash' – is going to wipe out civilisation soon anyway, I don't really know why resistance is important. I am concerned about environmental problems, that capital may destroy the conditions for the reproduction of life itself, But if I have to choose between capital and an 'environmental' alternative that will starve and slaughter people even more effectively than capital does now, maybe exploitation and colonialism aren't that bad, after all. I guess because this book is aimed at people more squarely in the environmental movement than I am, it never answers this question: why should anyone care about environmental problems, except to make people healthier and happier? I think his answer is, salmon. I don't want salmon to become extinct, either, but, call me crazy, better them than humans.

Sandy

Originally published in *Crowbar my heart: the world's greatest squatting zine*. Contact comradecrowbar@yahoo.com.au for info on the latest issue.

In this zine:

Alf from Alphington argues that the climate change movement needs to start moving from the spectacular to the real.

'The Zombie Dance of Social Democracy' dismantles the ideology of social democracy like an axe to the head of the living dead.

A report from climate camp in South Australia.

In 'Calais, On the Border' we see that the brutal suppression of migrants and the restriction of people's movement across borders is government policy in France, just as it is here, just as it is around the world.

SourDough reports on the 'Seeing Through Empire's New Clothes' conference.

A review of *Endgame* by Derrick Jensen.

News from Germany, Greece, Guinea, India,Iran, Mexico, Serbia, Uganda, UK, USA and Victoria,

Photos from University of California occupation - see brief news.

Events this month in Sydney:

Jura Books
440 Parramatta rd, Petersham
jura.org.au

6pm Saturday October 24
Raffle draw! A night of fun as Jura finally draws the winner in their mammoth fundraising raffle.

1pm Sunday October 25
Scooter zine working bee! Come and help create the next edition of the Scooter collective zine.

7pm Thursday October 29
Juracoustic! Jura's monthly acoustic show in the library. bring your unplugged noisemakers.

Black Rose Anarchist Library
22 Enmore Rd, Newtown
blackrosebooks.org

5:30pm Sunday October 11
Situationist Cinematheque! Three situationist films by Guy Debord.

11am Saturday October 17
Mega Jumbo Jumble Discount Spring Fair Book Sale! 100s of books for sale for cheap.

7pm Friday October 30
Mutiny Collective Omnibus launch! The collected writings of the Mutiny Collective 2003-2009.